

2001

What Impact, If Any, Does Employee Satisfaction And Employee Perception of an Organization Have on Customer Satisfaction and the Organization's Reputation?

Earlyne F. Johnson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.shu.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Johnson, Earlyne F., "What Impact, If Any, Does Employee Satisfaction And Employee Perception of an Organization Have on Customer Satisfaction and the Organization's Reputation?" (2001). *Theses*. 98.
<https://scholarship.shu.edu/theses/98>

**WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DOES EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND EMPLOYEE
PERCEPTION OF AN ORGANIZATION HAVE ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND
THE ORGANIZATION'S REPUTATION?**

BY

EARLYNE F. JOHNSON

Thesis Advisor

Michael S. McGraw, Ph.D.

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Corporate and Public Communication
Seton Hall University**

2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	iii
CHAPTER I	INTRODUCTION
	Background
	Research Question
	Subsidiary Questions
	Purpose of Study
	Objective
	Definition of Terms
	Limitations
CHAPTER II	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
	Introduction
	Elements of Employee Satisfaction
	Achieving Customer Satisfaction through Employee Satisfaction
CHAPTER III	DESIGN OF THE STUDY
	Population Sampled
	The Surveys
	Data Collection
CHAPTER IV	ANALYSIS OF THE DATA
	Introduction
	Data Review
CHAPTER V	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
	Future Study
REFERENCES	55
APPENDIXES	62
	Appendix A –
	A Brief Statement About the Port Authority of NY & NJ
	Appendix B – Job Satisfaction Survey
	Appendix C – J.D. Power and Associate May 2000 Terminal by Terminal Survey Results – Newark International Airport

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1	Overall, I really like the duties and activities that make up my job	43
2	There is a good fit between the job I do and my skills and abilities	44
3	Evaluations of my work performance have been done fairly	46
4	I feel I am paid fairly for the work I do	46
5	I intend to stay with this company for, at least, the next two years	47
6	I would stay with my company even if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay	47
7	Management makes clear what they expect of me	48
8	Employees are given the information they need to help them do their work well	49
9	My employer understands the balance between my work and family life	49
10	The people I work with make personal efforts to improve their skills so that they can make a better contribution to their jobs	50
11	I believe this organization deserves my loyalty	51

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Actions, beginning with the behavior of front-line employees, are some of a company's most powerful tools in customer communications. Without ensuring that the consumer promise is backed by employee actions, the company's message becomes viewed as dishonorable and meaningless. Skillful company leaders understand that customer attitudes are shaped by experience and that the best and most powerful way to shape a positive customer attitude is to demand a positive customer experience from front-line employees. Each of those customer transactions will frame the company's overall customer relationship.

As organizational leaders communicate to each employee the importance of customer service to the organization and that everyone plays an intricate role in providing the best services possible, quality leaders also realize that providing quality service to their internal customers, the employees, will result in improved customer satisfaction. "You can't deliver great customer service if your staff is miserable," says Reese (2000, p. 1) in her article "Strength of Service." That article goes on to state (and the author agrees), that "customer service has become the corporate mantra these days. Regardless of the industry, management is exhorting labor to bend over backwards for the folks who pay the bills – great employees help keep loyal customers" (p. 1).

Still, a company must establish what is important to its customers and employees in its specific business industry. The transportation industry is composed of an enormous variety of trades and business ventures. It is an industry that, until recently, has avoided strict regulation and kept out of the spotlight, rarely getting the attention of the press. Today, the transportation industry has been under tight scrutiny by the federal government, the press and

more savvy and sophisticated customers. Although not lacking in technology on how to build better aircraft and roads, the transportation industry is lacking the knowledge of providing customer satisfaction.

This study looks at job satisfaction among front-line employees in the transportation industry, specifically those who work at the three major airports -- John F. Kennedy International (JFK), Newark International (EWR) and LaGuardia (LGA) airports -- and Toll Collectors who work at the Toll Tunnels and Bridges owned and operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (see Appendix A). Generally, toll collectors have a reputation of providing bad or very limited customer service and during a May 2000 Terminal by Terminal survey (J.D. Power and Associates, 2000) at JFK, EWR and LGA departing passengers stated the lack of employee courtesy as their main reason for giving the airports low scores. The author will attempt to relate the lack of job satisfaction among these employees to the customer service -- good or bad -- provided by them.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (Port Authority) owns and oversee the operation of 17 airport terminals at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), Newark International Airport (EWR) and LaGuardia Airport (LGA). The Port Authority also owns and operates the Lincoln Tunnel (LT), Holland Tunnel (HT), and the George Washington Bridge (GWB). It also owns the Goethals Bridge, Outerbridge Crossing and Bayonne Bridge which combined make up the Staten Island Bridges (SIB). Front-line employees such as retail, food and beverage employees, and customer service representatives (known as red coats) represent each airport, and toll collectors represent each tunnel and bridge facility.

The Port Authority has recently set customer service and courtesy standards that each employee, no matter who their employer, must adhere to. In doing so, the Port Authority

must effectively address a variety of its own internal management challenges to ensure they have support. While most employees already have a customer service mind-set, there are those few obstinate employees that will interact with customers in such a way to deteriorate the image of the company. To combat negative customer interactions, the Port Authority has stepped up its customer communications and focus to include employee involvement in plans of raising customer satisfaction.

The Port Authority's Aviation Department current vision, in intensifying the customer communications plan is to

(a) provide outstanding quality, service, cost and value relationships for passenger and cargo customers and for suppliers, particularly the airlines, (b) provide the best airport operations anywhere while remaining responsive to the highest levels of environmental and community needs, (c) enhance customer service levels and maximize air service opportunities both for our customers and suppliers (airlines), (d) modernize terminals, complete landside and airside improvements, and provide for off airport access to take advantage of tremendous industry growth forecast (Aviation Department 2000-2004 Business Plan, p. 3).

Although the vision of quality customer service is not new to the Aviation Department or the Tunnels, Bridges and Terminals (TB&T) Department -- which manages the toll collectors -- it has been lacking action due to employee and service provider downsizing between 1995 and 1998. During this time period, there were no customer service initiatives and employee morale was low. Employees felt let down and no longer considered Port Authority a career opportunity. The Port Authority had fallen into the "1990s, the decade of

“ing”, that is, merging, acquiring, downsizing, rightsizing, streamlining and outsourcing” (Hudson Institute, 1997, p. 2). The only “ing” the Port Authority did not do was merging.

The negative feelings that fueled these now disgruntle employees placed a strain on the Port Authority’s business and customer relations. Perceptions are real and can affect any business. They can determine how employees respond to company initiatives and have an impact on customer relationships. Perception plays a critical role in the success or failure of any business. If an employee has a negative perception of the company, the customer during transactions between them will detect it. In this study the author hopes to also provide a significant link between employee and customer perception and company reputation.

Background

The Director of the Aviation Department, William R. DeCota, picks one of the three airports to visit every morning, usually arriving around 6:00am. He will go to a concession or newspaper stand and buy something small, like two newspapers, with a large bill, and wait for the reaction of the cashier during the transaction. Mr. DeCota says he does this because, “it’s the small interactions that mean the most to the customers’ experience” (personal communication, March 19, 2000). Knowing that a customer will always remember a bad experience more than a good one, Mr. DeCota was not pleased to find that during many of these transactions, he experienced “bad attitudes, inconsistent service and general cluelessness” while posing as a customer.

Mr. DeCota said he is, “dedicated to bringing back humanity into the travel industry and experience, and the customer service that comes with it” (personal communication, March 19, 2000). His eagerness to see results has led him to create a committee on equitable and fair wages and, since 1998, initiate several customer satisfaction studies with the help of

J.D. Power and Associates, a nationally recognized firm in customer satisfaction benchmarking.

Also, employee satisfaction has a great deal to do with customer treatment in almost each situation. "The unfortunate truth is that flying on an airplane today, while according to the transportation industry is the safest way to travel long distances, is as unpleasant for many passengers at it has ever been" (Leonhardt, 2000, p. 5.13). Many travelers view the aviation industry as a "we don't care about the customer" business because the airlines and airports know that, regardless of customer satisfaction, millions of people will use their facilities and planes to travel. Consequently, many airport and airline employees feel the same way when asked about their feelings toward their employers and work environment. Leonhardt (2000) exemplifies this kind of employee frustration, that can also lead to customer frustration, in describing an American Airlines flight due to land at 6:15pm at John F. Kennedy International that did not land until 10:30pm. During this time, American Airlines did not provide its employees with the proper information to inform passengers waiting to board the flight or families waiting to pick up their loved ones. As the frustration of the employees grew from not being able to supply the appropriate information the frustration of the customers grew even greater from not being informed. According to the Aviation Department 2000-2004 Business Plan (2000), with the recent growth in traveling passengers in the millions and a forecast for approximately four million more passengers by the year 2004, the aviation industry can not ignore quality customer service. Nor can this industry ignore employee satisfaction.

Unlike the aviation industry, toll roadways are not new to customer scrutiny. Every day thousands of passengers cross the New York/New Jersey toll roadways to get to their

destinations. According to the TB&T 2000-2004 Business Plan, the largest TB&T funding source is toll revenue, attributing the record growth in vehicles handled by the Port Authority's tunnels and bridges in 1999, marking a fifth consecutive year of record growth in traffic. Annual eastbound only traffic totaled 123.6 million vehicles in 1999.

Before the implementation of the E-ZPass electronic toll paying system at the tunnels and bridges surveys of motorists using the facilities indicated that waiting times at the toll plaza and construction at the facilities were most important to them. After the implementation of the E-ZPass system, motorists waiting time at the toll plazas was decreased significantly and customer satisfaction at the facilities was improved a great deal. This improvement was a major step for TB&T's customer satisfaction efforts and allowed the department to turn some of its focus on improving employees satisfaction and morale. Recent surveys of motorists using the tunnels and bridges on a regular basis indicated that the construction at the facilities, not the toll collectors, was the key factor in their current dissatisfaction with the facilities overall.

A large part of the Tunnels Bridges and Terminals 2000-2004 Business Plan (2000) was focused on "Internal Management Challenges" and employee relations. The plan addressed this issue by stating,

among the most critical internal management issues is the need to enhance staff skills given the rapid pace of today's technological advancements. New technologies will require a mix of staff skills and new training and development programs. Training and development needs are vital to ensure that the highest level of customer service are maintained. In the absence of effective training programs, the department will not

realize the full benefits from new innovations, and the talent pool for effective succession planning will be depleted (p. 15).

While the aviation department has its focus on developing the highest level of customer satisfaction, TB&T has not reached the highest level of customer satisfaction, but improved upon it significantly and now realizes that its employees need to be included in its pursuit of the highest level of customer satisfaction by improving job satisfaction.

Research Question

What impact, if any, does employee satisfaction and employee perception of the organization have on customer satisfaction and the company reputation? This research will specifically look at airport employees employed at the three major New York/New Jersey Port Authority airports, John F. Kennedy International Airport, Newark International Airport, LaGuardia Airport, as well as the Holland Tunnel, and Staten Island Bridges. The research will mainly look into job satisfaction and customer interactions.

Subsidiary Questions

The author will also look at the following questions throughout this study:

1. What employee satisfaction initiatives are in place now?
2. Does the company provide reward and recognition initiatives or training and development opportunities?
3. What customer satisfaction initiatives are in place now? Are there plans for more in the future?
4. How does the employee fit into the customer satisfaction initiatives and process?
5. What impact will the customer satisfaction initiatives have on the company?
6. What impact will the customer service initiatives have on the employee?

7. How will the company be able to measure the success of its employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction initiatives?

Purpose of the Study

While there have been many studies on job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, only recently have scholars started to study the relation between the two. "Customer satisfaction has become the driver of the entire organization in business-planning" (Dutka, 1993, p.54). However, without properly trained, informed and dedicated employees, a company can not implement its customer satisfaction plan and improve its reputation or image with customers.

Customer service standards are not new to the Port Authority, agency wide. However, only recently has the Port Authority begun to reinforce and implement these standards to improve the reputation and image of the organization, especially at the airports, tunnels and bridges. Furthermore, the transportation industry has not been a focus of research and study in the areas of employee job satisfaction, or employee satisfaction as it relates to customer satisfaction. Although this is an industry that will always have customers, regardless, gaining customer loyalty can be the difference between an airline growing and closing its doors for good. As a result, if an airline should close its doors, the airport loses customers and other funding and services that were once provided by the airline, thereby causing a negative impact to the services provided by the airport to the customer. The author believes that the transportation and travel industry recognizes that setting high customer standards is critical to the survival and prosperity of the individual companies that make up the industry. The transportation and travel industry should, therefore, also recognize that employees play a critical role in communicating and up-holding those standards. Employers should not,

reasonably, expect their employees to treat customers better than they are treated. A satisfied employee should be perceived as a satisfied customer.

Employee satisfaction depends on more than higher wages, but employees should feel as if they can prosper within the organization. Some of the issues in employee satisfaction consist of compensation, benefits, training, development, rewards, recognition, and inclusion in decision making by the organization that will effect their job. Many companies do not practice developing their employees' careers within the organization and subsequently lose their "star" employees. Companies should, "identify customer and employee needs and expectations, discover the relative impact of these on commitment and provide an indication of how well the company is meeting these needs" (Walker Information Group, 2000, p. 3).

Objective

The first objective of this study is to attempt to show how a company can implement and communicate effective customer service standards through its employees by implementing strategies to encourage employee commitment and satisfaction.

The second objective is to attempt to help executive, senior, and middle level managers better communicate to and with front-line employees at the Port Authority, resulting in improved employee relations and customer satisfaction.

Definition of Terms

1. Airport terminal operator: A private company or group of airlines that operate a specific airport terminal (i.e. Continental is the terminal operator for Terminal C at Newark Airport)

2. Concession(aires): Retail, food and beverage shops, and kiosks and newsstands inside the airports.

3. Benchmarking: The process of continuously comparing and measuring an organization against business leaders anywhere in the world to gain information which will help the organization take action to improve its performance.
4. Business plan: A plan developed to implement the strategic goals and objectives of a strategic plan at the business unit level of the organization.
5. Airport access: Any means by which a passenger gains access to the airport by any form of transportation.
6. Customers: The person or group who establishes the requirement of a process and receives or uses the outputs of that process; or the person or entity directly served by the department or agency.
7. Internal customer: An individual or group inside the boundaries of the producing organization who receives or uses the output from a previous stage or process to contribute to production of the final product or service.
8. Metrics: The elements of a measurement system consisting of key performance indicators, measures, and organization does, whom it does it for, and how it does it.
9. Strategic goal: A long-range change target that guides an organization's efforts in moving toward a desired future state.
10. Strategic planning: The continuous and systematic process whereby guiding member of an organization make decisions about its future, develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured.

Limitations

For this research, the author focused on articles of research and information presented between the years of 1990 and 2000. The author chose this time frame after a review of the

literature showed that the topic of employee satisfaction as it relates to customer satisfaction has been a rising research issue since 1990 and continues to be. The author also focused her original research on employees at the three major airports, the Holland Tunnel and the Staten Island Bridges, all operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

There was limited data from the Port Authority within the past 10 years on employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. The author's data on employee satisfaction is based on a select number of airport employees who allowed anonymous interviews, toll collectors and a sample of office employees that completed anonymous surveys (see Appendix B). These findings, therefore, will not reflect the culture or attitudes of the entire organization or of all office, airport, tunnel and bridge employees.

The author could not obtain surveys of airport employees because airport management would not allow it. The author asked to distribute the survey during several customer service refresher training sessions, which are given to airport employees after six months to a year of employment. The author was told, after management's review of the survey, that, "The survey was too long and complicated for the targeted employees to concentrate on and comprehend" (personal communication, September 29, 2000, JFK; November 6, 2000, LGA). According to feedback from EWR, the session attendees thought the survey was too long and did not want to take out time to complete it. The author, however, was able to get airport employees to discuss their job satisfaction by taking trips to the airport and talking briefly to select employees.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

"Successful organizations, whether they are Fortune 500 companies, state or municipal governments, or one of the many federal agencies, have recognized that developing a strong customer focus is an absolute necessity," (Federal Benchmarking Consortium, 1997, p.5). Organizations have begun to seriously focus on the customer as a key driver in planning for the future, often overlooking the most important elements of a successful organization, its employees. No matter how good an organization's plan is, if employees feel they are not valued participants, it will not work. Therefore, employee communication and involvement at all levels within the organization is a critical factor for success. Poorly communicated goals can lead to a misguided employee-customer relationship, thereby leading to the downfall of an organization. On the other hand, the more clearly goals are communicated, and the more involved employees are, the easier it is for employees to decide what needs to be accomplished in successfully implementing the organization's plan.

Prior research on employee satisfaction in relation to customer satisfaction surveyed or studied individuals and organizations within sales, retail, and healthcare industries. In those industries, it is the job of the customer-contact employee to win the loyalty of or attract a new customer to do business with their organization. The author, in this research, chose to study customer-contact employees of organizations that, in essence, do not need to win the loyalty of or attract a new customer. These are the employees of the transportation industry. This discussion of the literature also includes

comments from the author about how particular information gleaned from the literature compared with what she learned from her survey respondents and how the literature supported her thinking about customer and employee satisfaction.

Before the Internet, before wireless communication, and before 1998, the end results or bottom line of its financial status inherently drove the organizations that own and operate transportation facilities (i.e. toll bridges and tunnels, airports, and railroads). Transportation organizations and agencies know that there is a time in everyone's life where they will have no choice but to interact with a bus driver, train conductor, toll collector at a bridge or tunnel facility, or an airport or airline customer service representative. This thinking created a climate within transportation agencies that took customers and employees for granted. Today, a new realization of care and concern by transportation organizations are creating a different climate for the employees and the customers.

Masterson (1999) suggests and most researchers agree that "the way an organization treats its employees impacts the way employees treat customers"(p.1). Masterson also indicates that in most service industry professions, "employees' perceptions of fairness affect their attitudes toward and perceptions about the organization (organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and perceived organizational support), subsequently influencing their behaviors toward customers" (p.1). Since 1997 there has been a trend in research hypothesizing that the effect on customer satisfaction and service depends on employee empowerment and communication, therefore, indicating that to be successful as an organization, employees must fully participate in the decision-making process, and be held accountable for results. During this process, top

management must be able to communicate effectively and, at the same time, demonstrate the employees' value to the organization. "The bottom line, to be successful, organizations must ensure that employees are trusted to do a good job" (Oakland & Oakland, 1998, p.189). Only then will employees be motivated and committed to delivering quality products or services, which meet or even exceed customer expectations, ultimately, leading to superior business performances and customer satisfaction results.

In late 1997, major transportation authorities along with the United States Government turned its goals to becoming "customer driven organizations that maintain a focus on the needs, expectations, both spoken and unspoken, of customers, both present and future, in the creation and/or improvement of the product or service provided" (Federal Benchmarking Consortium, 1997, p.2). The Federal Benchmarking Consortium study (1997) investigated employee satisfaction and organizational perception of the transportation customer-contact employee in this new customer driven climate and its impact on customer satisfaction and organizational perception. The author attempts to prove that, just as with sales, retail, and healthcare employees, the service behavior and capabilities of transportation customer-contact employees has a strong impact on the customer's satisfaction and perception with the organization. Regardless of whether the customer has a choice or not in using public transportation options to get to their destinations, the customer should have a pleasurable experience during their travel. Case in point, if the employee is treated well by the organization, the customer will be treated well by the employee.

Elements of Employee Satisfaction

Employee Involvement and Empowerment

According to the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA), the costs for advertising and interviewing a non-management job candidate is \$1,487.35 (Surline, 1999). The BNA also reports that these positions may cost \$10,000 or more if you are lucky enough to find the right person to fill the job. When this employee leaves the organization, is it looked on as an asset walking out the door? In a study of employee retention, Surline (1999) also found that the number one reason for people to leave a job is lack of job satisfaction. Included in lack of job satisfaction were lack of employee communication and involvement in daily decisions.

Employee involvement is an important aspect of organizational life and is key to achieving organizational effectiveness and positive employee perceptions. Researchers agree that if employees are adequately informed about matters that concern them and they are allowed to make decisions relevant to their work, there will be benefits to the organization and the employee. In addition to empowering employees to make decisions that affect the way they do their jobs, managers should also give employees feedback on a regular basis to let them know how they are doing in their jobs. In their book, The New Corporate Cultures, Deal and Kennedy (1999) argue that today's business leaders in their single-minded pursuit in shareholder interest -- which in a transportation organization would be politicians -- have created employee distrust, skepticism and fear that have ripped apart corporate cultures. Deal and Kennedy also suggests that the last, best hope for repairing and revitalizing cultures lies with managers, supervisors and team leaders with the people skills to restore lost trust. These lower-level managers have the

credibility and respect that many senior leaders have merged or downsized away. That said, middle managers and supervisors can help create more trusting, motivated, and committed workers.

Previous studies have also indicated the positive impact of supportive supervisors, teams and technology on employee satisfaction. These factors have also been shown to influence customer contact employee behavior and customer satisfaction. According to Sergeant and Frenkel (1999), effective support services and policies that assist contact employees in their dealings with customers foster employee satisfaction. During a casual conversation in March 1999 with a few toll collectors at the Goethals Bridges, one of the Staten Island Bridges, the author detected a sense of dissatisfaction with their jobs. When asked specifically how involved they were in daily decisions that affected their jobs, they responded that they were rarely included in day to day decisions and that top management did not value their opinions or, better yet, them. Although the toll collectors were constantly listening to and expected meet the needs of customers, no one was listening to or meeting their needs.

The best hope for creating a high performing work place are the development of leaders at all levels who care about the human side of the people they lead. In the same conversation in July with toll collectors from the Holland Tunnel, the opposite was true. The collectors were continuously asked for feedback from and to attend decision making discussions with management. The collectors not only felt that management noticed and appreciated the efforts they put forth on a daily basis to do their job well, but that management also listened to them.

In August, during a conversation with five customer service representatives at Newark International Airport, all five said they felt comfortable they were a part of daily decisions concerning their jobs within the company that hires them, but they felt no sense of loyalty or belonging towards the Port Authority. The customer service representatives viewed the Port Authority as having too many rules and policies that worked to limit their decision-making freedom, therefore taking away from the customer service they provide.

Given the value of employee involvement, it is absolutely necessary for management to implement open, two-way communication to inform the employee of new developments and to solicit their ideas, complaints, and concerns. The author summarizes the different conversations with toll collectors and customer service representatives as, according to Eccles (1993), the three types of involvement: suggestion, job, and high. Suggestion involvement is based on communication with information being passed up and down the organization. Job involvement is gained through teamwork. The dynamics of teamwork is believed to relate to both the job characteristics and perceptions of employees that the work is meaningful, engaging, and significant. High involvement assumes the employee can be trusted to make important decisions about work activities. Based on these factors, it is proposed that communication, teamwork, and decision making account for a majority of employee satisfaction. Thus, the organization should communicate its values and the value of the employee to its workforce and, at the same time, "recognize the tendency for contrasting perception between management and employees. Don't assume everyone is in agreement about the idea of quality employment" (Taylor & Cosenza, 1997, p. S14).

Researchers from Walker Information (1999), a benchmarking global market research organization that specializes in helping companies grow through customer and employee communication, suggest that a company involve employees in designing and implementing their strategic plans. This allows the company to build a measurement for a reward system that involves the employee. Walker Information also suggests that it is far easier to involve the employee along the way than having to retrofit employee concerns and demands after plans are up and running. In cases studies -- one of Sprint Communications and another of Atlanta Medical Center, where employees were asked to contribute their ideas, sit in on decision making discussions and help to create a plan for implementation -- this strategy overwhelmingly increased employee participation, motivation, moral, and continuous involvement in decision-making processes (Larson, 1999; Leonard, 1998).

Employee Communication and Trust

An organization's strategy or plan should be communicated effectively throughout the company. Johnson (1993) indicates that understanding communication within organizations is important because it acts as the primary means for organizational members to process information, reduce ambiguity, and coordinate their actions. According to a study of best practices in customer driven strategic planning conducted in 1997 by the Federal Benchmarking Consortium, effective communication is the lifeblood of successful strategic planning and the overall organization. Also, in 1997, a benchmarking study entitled Workforce 2020, conducted by the Hudson Institute, an internationally recognized public policy research organization that forecasts trends and develops solutions for governments, businesses and the public, stated that if floor level

people can tell how they relate to the corporate plan, what their metrics are, how they impact it, and they know about the strategic plan, you know you've been successful. "Because communication consists of sharing information, supervisor use of proper communication practices may offer an effective means to reduce employees ambiguity. Consequently, employee performance and satisfaction may also improve, resulting in increased levels of service quality to customers" (Johnlke & Duhan, 2000, p. 155).

Communication is important at all levels and should be multi-directional from the top-down, bottom-up, and across the organization. In addition, Johnlke and Duhan (2000) suggests that of all the communication practices considered, the use of bi-directional flows is most extensively associated with reduced service employee uncertainty. Employee communications can flow through variety of forms. Through e-mail, bulletins, memos, letters, newsletters, and other information handouts combined with face-to-face interaction. The main caution is to understand that some channels have different effects on different employees. In today's technological environment, many organizations rely more and more on electronic communication, however, it is important for managers to walk, talk and interact personally with employees at all levels.

Internal communication must do more than tell or inform. Its primary function is to bring about understanding. Complex issues should be introduced with simplicity and clarity while highly sensitive of the issues should be introduced with care and concern. Hence, no matter what the issue at hand is, the need to communicate effectively is important. Management must communicate to employees in such a way as to always say this is what every employee should know, my door is open if you need to talk with me, and we care about and want to protect our employees.

In addition, all employees should also be encouraged to participate in open dialogue without a threat of repercussions.

Open communication is effective and highly valued by employees when: 1) it is relevant to employees' work lives and therefore of interest to them, with real, near term impact that will be perceptible to them, 2) it can be expressed in specific enough terms that employees won't consider broad, vague, or insubstantial, 3) it can be directly linked to business goals and direction, and 4) it clearly describes milestones of works in progress and isn't simply a report of the organization "thinking out loud" (Morris, 1999, p.14).

"The purpose of (employee) communication is to enhance job performance" (Curley, 1999, p.42), however, in many organizations there exist climates that are not conducive to open communication and tend to discourage managers and employees from exercising their communication skills, thereby leaving the employee feeling less valued by the organization. For example, during the conversations with the toll collectors at the Goethals Bridge, they each agreed that if they spoke up about certain matters it might jeopardize their jobs because their peers or supervisors do not respect confidentiality. On the other hand, the toll collectors at the Holland Tunnel and customer service representatives were more inclined to confide in their supervisors than with their peers. Thus showing more trust in communications with their superiors than co-workers.

Thus, employees must have trust in their organization and its management. For most organizations, trust is only another word in the employee handbook. It sounds good on paper but is never enacted. In an interview printed in HR Magazine, Dennis Foster (as cited in Leonard, 1998), President of 360 deg Communications said, "I encourage an

open, relaxed work environment. 360 deg adheres to something called the TRUST principles, which I wholeheartedly endorse. TRUST is an acronym for teamwork, respect, understanding, support, and tenacity” (p. 3). Creating a strong sense of trust among employees through good ethics and teamwork is part of the core success of many companies. This shared perception of organizational policies and procedures, creates the organizational climate.

Organizational Climate

A new work life model exists in organizations today. The work-for-life type of organizations that most of our parents and grandparents worked for either no longer exist or as a grandparent would say, “just is not the same anymore.” Then, organizations would create a good work environment, provide job security, take care of you, and guide your career development. Now, organizations quickly change rules and policies of the work environment every day, provide no job or salary security and tell you to manage your own career. This environment, although tolerable, is extremely stressful.

Organizational climate is a key factor of the overall organization. Employee involvement will not take place in a climate that is not conducive to meet the needs of the employee. Research suggests that there are three dimensions of organizational climate: innovative, supportive, and bureaucracy. Innovative climates involve creativity and encourage teamwork and allow considerable opportunity for employees to be involved in the decision making required to undertake their work effectively. Supportive climates enhance teamwork and communication by creating an atmosphere of cooperation and openness. There are two types of bureaucracy climates, as pointed out by Alder and Borys (1996), coercive and enabling. A coercive bureaucratic climate has procedures

that stifle creativity, while enabling bureaucratic climates have procedures that help guide activities.

Transportation organizations have recently begun to look into plans to create innovative and supportive organizational climates. Since the traditional climate of a majority of transportation agencies is highly political because it is usually a part of a state or federal government office, the change is slower than that of a non-political climate. Although the author could not find a reasonable term or definition of such political organization environment, Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson, and Anthony (1999) indicate that a number of scholars have attempted to provide a suitable definition of what constitutes political behavior in organizations. The lack of agreement on a definition of organizational politics has not allowed the contribution of organizational politics in literature to reach its full potential.

“While employees want full and challenging careers, they also want time for home and family” (The Hudson Institute, 1997). However, organizations continuously demand that many of their staff devote quality time to work on weekends and late hours. To reflect the sentiments of the Hudson Institute, when the CEO of Atlanta Medical Center learned that it was hospital policy for employees to be docked 15 minutes of pay if they were late to work by even one minute, he changed the policy to work in the employees favor. Now employees are allowed up to seven minutes before getting docked.

Support for the employee is an important part of the organization climate. Supportive climates usually incorporate such values as harmony, openness, friendship, collaboration, encouragement, sociability, personal freedom and trust. Previous research

suggested that organizational support was related to social theories and generally did not consider the supportive aspects of organizational climate as a role in building the framework for management practices and organizational strategies. With a new focus on support, a change in organizational climate can take immediate effect. In some cases, the climate change can be precipitated by the implementation of a strategic planning process; in other cases it can facilitate the accomplishment of the planning process. Regardless, it should include a large dose of job satisfaction, opportunities for personal growth and a work environment that encourages open communication without the threat of politics entering into the process.

Reward and Recognition to Encourage Involvement

In a study of workforce commitment, the Hudson Institute (1997) found that the most powerful drivers for employees were (a) reward and recognition and (b) opportunities for growth. An organization needs to focus its energies on taking care of its employees who in turn will take better care of the customer. Rewarding employees does not always have to be monetary in value. Appreciation is more important than money and money alone does not promote loyalty and seldom retains motivated employees. Organizations found that employees would spend most or all of their money on other members of the family. For this reason, many organizations are now rewarding its employees by substituting monetary gifts and bonuses with theater tickets, gift certificates, health club memberships, and other items for the employees' use. These organizations want the employee to enjoy their well-deserved reward for themselves. Papiernik (2000) quoted Bradley Blum of the Olive Garden restaurant chain, who was named operator of the year at the Multi-Unit Foodservice Operators conference in

Atlanta, as he stated, "The Olive Garden has really focused on operating excellence. With a clear vision about the genuine Italian dining experience, we do a lot to share that throughout the company. We've taken people to Italy to help bring that to life"(p. 65).

Recognizing employee efforts also go a long way in the organization. It puts an added value on the employee and makes them feel truly appreciated. People want to know their work made a difference and they want to be a part of something that matters. Employees should be recognized throughout the year for their continued efforts, not just once a year for perfect attendance, which is standard for Port Authority office personnel. In fact, according to Bob Nelson (1993), author of 1001 Ways to Reward Employees, the number one form of reward desired by employees is verbal appreciation or praise from their immediate boss and the number two desired form of reward is written appreciation or praise by their immediate boss. To show its appreciation for employees, for its first annual report, 360 deg Communications incorporated each of its 4,400 employee names in the annual report. Although taken by surprise, the employee's received a return on their investment of hard work and time. More importantly, the employees felt a belonging to the organization, as if they were a part of it all.

The transportation industry has fell short of employee reward and recognition in these areas. A senior level manager once stated to the author, "Why should we have a reward and recognition ceremony? Didn't the employee just do their job? Don't they get a pay check? That should be reward enough" (personal communication, September 2000). What this senior level manager does not realize is that appreciation and respect goes a longer way than the employee's pay check. Needless to say, although the author found no solid proof, she is willing to state that because most senior level managers in the

transportation industry are typical of this one, reward and recognition are not the highlights of transportation staff.

Another recognition technique is to offer employees career opportunities, job training and development, and competitive salaries and benefits. When organizations openly offer skills and knowledge training and room for advancement for its employees' career paths it says, "We care about you" to the workforce. Also, when an organization recognizes an individual employee's effort and extends a promotional opportunity to the employee, it sends a stronger message of care and concern to the entire workforce. In its 2000-2004 Business Plan, TB&T (2000) state that they are coming to a point where they do not have experienced supervisors or managers to fill certain positions. This would be an opportune time to recognize the best toll collectors and extend supervisor/management training as a promotional opportunity.

Competitive salaries and benefits are the building blocks of employee retention. The organization has to adjust salaries upward at least annually to stay competitive in its industry. Organizations have become creative in retaining staff with benefits and bonuses. Many organizations may provide in-house child care, and gym or fitness centers as an added benefit along with health and dental insurance, pension and 401K plans, and generous vacation and sick leave. The better the benefit plan, the more likely it is that the employee will stay with the organization and the higher the employee's job satisfaction will be.

Achieving Customer Satisfaction through Employee Satisfaction

Customer Communication

Customers are very savvy in this “new economy” era we live in. The minimal amount of service that just meets customer expectation is no longer acceptable. The rise of the internet, wireless information systems, and smart (computer) chips have changed the rules of doing business today, leaving many struggling to catch up. Most organizations scream the importance of customer satisfaction, but few really exhibit excellence in its satisfaction related customer communications. The message must be consistent and tell the company’s promise. Once an organization has captured the customer’s trust, it may have a customer for life.

Customer satisfaction is more than keeping a customer happy, it is about showing the customer the organization has set a standard for excellence and is willing to meet or exceed expectations through superior performance and initiatives. Walker Information (1999) researchers suggests that a good customer satisfaction management system does more than create a warm, fuzzy feeling in customers’ minds. It should affect what customers say about the company and what they do. Take the aviation industry for example, “think back to your last business trip. Chances are, it was marked by long lines, delays, confusion and frustration. Often this confusion arises because the airlines can’t seem to get critical information – such as which gate your plane is leaving from – from point A, the database where it’s stored, to point B, the gate agent computer terminal or your palm pilot” (Seminario, 2000, p.1) on time for your flight. In the industry that pioneered what is now called e-business, because Boeing has used a computer system for airlines to order planes and equipment for the past 20 years, customers assume that

airlines and airports would offer these services without hesitation. However, the truth is that most airlines and airports have not upgraded its computer technology in the past 30 years. Now, in a frenzy to achieve better customer satisfaction in an industry that has created an environment of extremely dissatisfied customers, most airlines and airports are struggling to quickly upgrade and implement new computer equipment and technology. As successful organizations are rapidly learning or have learned to use today's technology and challenges and turn them into best practices and customer satisfaction.

Although technology is faster and permits us to deliver much more information, are speed and volume the real customer service and communication problems? Could these problems be more of a matter of challenges in clarity and meaning of organizational customer communication? While using technology to automate processes that once are currently in the hands of skilled workers and creative professionals, organizations must also raise the bar on training its employees to use this new technology to deliver the highest levels of customer service. "The cornerstone of all an organizations improvements efforts is people" (Verespej, 1998, p.28). Reflecting on this, it is up to the organizations to provide the employee with the necessary tools, skills, and authority to serve the customer. Service is their job, so they may be able to make certain decisions on "how" better than management. Such full commitment means that everyone knows who the customers are and has targets, plans and measures established for improving customer satisfaction. This empowers the employees to make more decisions, be a part of the strategic process and be accountable for the results of their decision, significantly achieving a higher success level for the organization and customer satisfaction.

In addition, "if companies, industries and whole nations are in the process of reinventing themselves, then it would seem logical that corporate communications as we have known it in the 20th century is not likely to survive the first hectic years of the new century" (Nemec, 1999, p.21). The recently released Air Quality Rating (AQR) Report (Forino, 1999), which ranks the top 10 major US airlines annually, find that customers are near the breaking point with dissatisfaction when it comes to service. As a result, the Port Authority's Aviation Department -- as well as the aviation industry -- is trying to reinvent the air travel experience for passengers. In doing so, the improvements developing from this transformation must be communicated effectively to air travel customers.

There are many outlets, new and old, in which an organization can utilize to communicate to its customer. The Aviation Department of the Port Authority of NY and NJ created a series of banners, poster board, magazine, and other advertisements to let customers know how the airports are improving and have special alert card messages for on airport passengers relaying construction and parking messages. Even though customers were appreciative of the banners and ads on airport improvement, it did not compensate for the lack of communication of the amount of construction, decreased parking and tighter roadways around the airports. Thus the Aviation Department had to re-think its customer entire communication strategy inform customers of matters concerning airport construction and parking before even leaving home. Instead of relying on traditional corporate communication avenues of communicating, the Aviation Department has instructed its own airport and aviation employees to deliver a plan that will best communicate airport issues to customers.

Customer Satisfaction

"If you really want to satisfy customers, don't do the expected – go well beyond it" (Ammons & Kohfeld, 1999, p.50). Some organizations have had a customer satisfaction measurement program in place for years, but have not initiated results from it. Customer services that are well thought out based upon the understanding of what customers expect and supported with great resources and attentive management are usually successful because it is focused on the customer and the employee.

A customer driven organization is one that maintains a focus on the needs of employees and customers in the creation and improvement of its products and services. In fact, customer satisfaction is the most heavily weighted of Business Excellence Models, awarding honors such as the Malcolm Baldrige award or the J.D. Power and Associates Benchmarking/Best Practices award to organizations achieving outstanding customer service each year. What is it that allows these organizations to be an authority in customer satisfaction? These organizations, as renowned effective habits expert Stephen Covey (1989) would say, "begin with the end in mind." They see the desired results of customer satisfaction from the customer's eye. These organizations also understand that the quality of customer service is a direct link to the level of customer satisfaction, which is shaped by the customer's experience with an organization.

Organizational service or product information will usually come from organizations' frontline or customer contact employees. The best way for an organization to achieve superior customer satisfaction is by listening carefully to the employees who interact most often with customers on a daily basis. At the same time, frontline employees must send out a consistent message that tells customers the

organization cares about, values and is committed to quality service. "Dissemination of information in a consistent, honest method, should be any company's top priority. If you don't follow through on your promises, success will be short term" (Gallanis, 2000, p.2). When care and concern is communicated effectively to the customer, the organization gains their trust and loyalty. On the other hand, by not communicating service concerns, companies throw away and take for granted their existing customers.

For example, "a customer satisfaction research and consulting firm, TARP in Arlington Va. found that on average, dissatisfied customers will tell as many as 16 friends or colleagues about bad experiences with a company" (PR News, 1999, p. 1). On the other hand, if a customer has a positive experience, they are more likely to return and stay loyal for as long as the positive experiences lasts. Overcoming the challenges to gain or retain a loyal customer is often more valuable than attracting a new customer to an organization. Therefore, an organization must demand positive customer experiences from its frontline employees.

Measurement tools frequently used for measuring customer satisfaction are surveys and focus groups. The Aviation and the Tunnel Bridges and Terminals Departments have completed several types of surveys and focus groups to measure the satisfaction of customers using its facilities. While TB&T relied on mail-in comment card surveys from passengers using the Port Authority owned tunnels, bridges, and bus terminals, Aviation relied on the expertise of J.D. Power and Associates to produce benchmarking surveys and recommendations for improvement.

Walker Information suggested that customers with one foot out the door claim to be more satisfied. According to the TB&T 2000-2004 Business Plan (2000), passengers

using the Port Authority Bus Terminal, arriving and leaving immediately, indicated an increased rating in customer satisfaction. The Aviation department produced more significant results from its surveys in that aviation's customer satisfaction survey in May 2000 (see Appendix C) indicated the highest rate of satisfied customers were those coming in on arriving flights and immediately leaving the airport (J.D. Power and Associates, 2000). Passengers waiting for departing flights decreased in satisfaction. Other than the delay crisis throughout the aviation industry, departing passengers indicated that employee courtesy and lack of information were key factors in their decision to record low satisfaction ratings. That said, it is crucial to any organization that the frontline customer contact employees stay focused on customers' needs.

Customer – Employee Interaction and Impact of Employee's Perception on the Customer

An organization can not expect outstanding customer service if its staff is miserable. According to Voros (2000), satisfied employees are the first step to gaining customers. Since both are an organization's customers, the organization can not expect their employees to treat customers better than they are treated. Larson (1999) suggests that a customer can tell if you like or hate your job. Whether you are frustrated or appreciated, it will filter down through your attitude and response toward the customer. Employees should be focused on the goal of paying careful attention to each customer interaction so the customer will not get the wrong message about the company. An organization should want its employees to give each customer high quality service while reflecting a positive attitude.

On August 14, 2000 the Port Authority distributed a company wide publication entitled, Avoid Negativity; Show Loyalty To Your Agency (Customers First for

Government, 2000), which stated, "Some of your co-workers have nothing good to say about your department or agency, and customers are picking up on it. Negative talk at work not only wastes time, it drags down morale and reinforces the false impression that all government employees are unpleasant and uncooperative" (p.1). This publication was the result of a brush of rumors among toll collectors that first, created a distrust of the Port Authority's intentions in implementing the E-ZPass electronic payment system as a form of customer convenience and second, among office employees whose morale was lowering day by day due to reorganization and restructuring of department and divisions. The employees took these actions to mean the abolishment of their employment and conveyed this feeling during customer transactions and talking with friends and co-workers. Poor internal relationships are rarely invisible to the customer and will eventually have a negative impact on external relationships.

Perceptions are real and poor service can quickly corrode an organization's reputation. The interaction between the customer listening and being attentive to the frontline employees is a powerful tool. This interaction will shape the customer's perception of the company in seconds. Walker Information Group (1999) reported that in a service industry, gaining a competitive advantage is impossible without employee commitment. How employees feel about their jobs has the greatest impact on their commitment. As a result, since customers get most of their information from employees, the customers' perceptions of quality are influenced by the service they receive.

Providing quality customer service is like hitting a moving target, therefore employees must be involved from the start and all communications should incorporate the relationship between the customer and the employee, meet the needs of both and

improve satisfaction of both. For instance, the largest complaint of customers, according to the American Customer Standards Index is that companies do not listen to them. Companies in return will survey customers and get the knowledge of what the customer feels at the present. Yet, the employee interacting with the customer can see trends occurring firsthand that are not portrayed in the survey and be able to provide a proactive approach to improving customer needs and thereby exceeding customer service requirements.

Examples of the successful employee and customer interaction that can shape a positive customer perception can be seen at American Express where they train their employees to concentrate on the customer through its "Putting the People First" program which focuses on the personal and professional development of the employee; and Saturn automobile makers, whose motto is "A commitment to customer enthusiasm through employee interaction." The Saturn company is not only known for providing quality cars, but for giving outstanding customer service by training their employees to create a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere for the car buyer (Burson-Marsteller Knowledge Development Division, 2000).

Impact of Customer's Perception on the Company

A good name is better than riches. A study by Burson-Marsteller (1998) with Wirthlin Worldwide found that corporate reputation is more important today than it was 5 years ago. Perceptions can generate or solve problems and build or diminish value. A good name can help the customer interpret information about a product or service, provide them with confidence in their decisions and enhance customer satisfaction. Changing customers' perceptions of the organization's values, needs and performance

can either destroy or revitalize the organization. Many organizations associate their customer perception with their brand reputation. However, Walker Information (1999) found that an organization's reputation is made up of its product quality, management abilities, financial performance, social responsibility, and market leadership. Certainly, an organization's advertising, brochures, media releases, employee publications, community events, and public relation messages also impacts its customer perception and reputation.

Since a consumer dictates that an organization operate legally and ethically or suffer the consequences of a bad reputation, as a transportation authority, an entity that will have customers regardless, the Port Authority must consider the issues that make up an organization's reputation. The Aviation Department has been under heavy examination among the airports' surrounding communities. Such scrutiny has led to community members speaking out to various local media outlets including newspapers and television news programs. Even at the lowest level, the process of bringing about a perceptual change happens on both an emotional and rational level and is dependent on the actions of the organization. If an organization want to change its customers' mind they must give the customer the actual facts taking into the content of the message and its possible perceived meaning.

Although the outcry of the communities may not reflect the reality of the situation, however, every day there is a media forum looking for breaking news about a company gone bad, breaking laws, or doing any other unethical acts. As a result, potential customers reading or watching this news as it happens, depending on the style and tone, will be influenced and may change their perception of the organization. To

combat the efforts put forth in such media outlets, the organization needs to use its own media – newsletters, brochures, advertising – to help change or manage the customer's perception.

Leading organizations are recognizing that maximizing customer satisfaction, long-term profits, and competitive position involves careful attention to managing intangible as well as tangible assets. Organizations need to ensure that external communications are coordinated with the customer service processes and communications of the frontline staff. This communication should always be executed, the strategy and integration, by the executive office. That is, the executive office needs to manage the perceptions of the employees, customers, officials and community members who allow the organization to achieve its results.

Therefore, in addition to the frontline employee, the involvement of executives in the development and orchestration of communications strategy enforces its context, thus leading the path to the customer's perception of and satisfaction with the organization.

Chapter III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Population Sampled

In this study, the author attempts to show the impact employee satisfaction has on customer satisfaction through services provided to and by customer contact employees. The author then attempts to take these results and link them to the perception employees and customers have of the organization. Employee satisfaction data were collected by a survey (see Appendix A) given to toll collectors in September 2000 and October 2000 at the Holland Tunnel and Staten Island Bridges and through discussions in August 2000 and September 2000 with customer service representatives at Newark International Airport. Customer satisfaction data were collected from surveys (see Appendix B) taken in May 2000 by J.D. Power and Associates (See Appendix C) at Newark, John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia airports and at the toll lanes and Port Authority Bus Terminal by the Tunnels, Bridges and Terminals Department.

One of the key factors that may influence employees' perceptions of an organization is organizational climate. Organizational climate helps to set the tone of the organization and can improve or impair employee satisfaction. The author targeted the Aviation and TB&T Departments because although they are within the same organization, each department and each facility of that department operates as its own organization and reflects a different climate to its employees. Thus, the author hypothesized that a perceived climate of organizational support will reflect a positive perception and enhance employee satisfaction.

Toll collectors and customer service representatives are usually the first and sometimes the only representative of the tunnels, bridges and airports to the customer. These

employees form the customer's satisfaction with and perception of the organization by the services they provide. Toll collectors at the Holland Tunnel and the customer service representatives at Newark International Airport are offered reward and incentive options for providing exceptional customer service versus toll collectors at the Staten Island Bridge who have not yet begun to receive reward and incentives. Through this the author attempts to use the survey data to prove that incentives and rewards, such as an gift card to a major department store, a semi-formal award program, or other recognition such as employee of the month, impacts employee satisfaction and customer service.

The Surveys

The customer satisfaction survey developed by J.D. Power and Associates, a nationally recognized consulting firm known for its benchmarking programs in customer satisfaction, was to provide the Aviation Department with specific knowledge of where its customer service is lacking. The key lacking areas were signs and directions, facility cleanliness, courtesy of staff, variety and quality of food, beverage, and retail shops, security, and airport access. The surveys were given to arriving and departing passengers at all three airports and received an 85% response rate. Similarly, according to the Tunnels Bridges and Terminals 2000 – 2004 Business Plan (2000), a recent survey of motorists at the tunnels and bridges facilities indicated that waiting times at the toll plazas, travel time predictability, and impacts of construction activity are the facility attributes most important to them (p.12). Having different needs from a variety of customers who use the tunnels, bridges and airports, each department and facility must be able to manage its employees' perceptions and enhance their job satisfaction, while promoting quality customer service and satisfaction.

The author developed a job satisfaction survey, and mailed 16 surveys each, to general managers of both the Holland Tunnel on September 27, 2000, the Staten Island Bridges, on October 2, 2000 using interoffice mail and providing a confidential envelope with each survey pre-addressed for return to the author. The survey was also mailed, using the postal system, to the customer service refresher training coordinators at Newark, Kennedy, and LaGuardia airports for distribution during customer service training sessions during the months of October and November of 2000.

The Holland Tunnel and Staten Island Bridge managers sent the surveys to the toll supervisors with a note introducing the survey and instructions that they were to be returned, concealed in the confidential envelope provided, by October 11, 2000. The author then attempted to collaborate with the customer service refresher training coordinators to have airport customer service representatives complete the survey during a training session. Since, customer service representatives are not direct employees of the Port Authority, they are very suspicious of anything asked of them when a Port Authority employee is involved. Although the author, while attending a training session at Newark airport, explained that she was not acting as an employee, but as a graduate student doing research, the customer service representatives were still hesitant to complete the surveys.

The author did not have the opportunity to attend training sessions to have surveys completed by customer service representatives at John F. Kennedy International and LaGuardia Airports. When the author requested that the customer service refresher training coordinators collaborate with her for survey purposes, after they reviewed the survey, the author was told that customer service representatives would not understand the questions, nor would they be able to concentrate long enough to honestly complete the survey. The author

would like to note here that she and her advisor worked hard to create a survey that was easy to read and understand. The response from the JFK and LGA training coordinators, to the author, represents their distrust of airport employee knowledge and decision making.

The author also sent a preliminary sample survey on September 17, 2000 to 10 Port Authority employees, 8 whose offices were located at the World Trade Center in Manhattan, 1 located at the Technical Center in Hoboken, and 1 at the Journal Square Transportation Center in Jersey City. Of the 10 sample surveys, 6 were completed and returned. The results of these surveys were of such interest that the author decided to include them in the data analysis to further prove the impact of organizational climate and employee involvement on job satisfaction and employee perception.

Data Collection

The survey was designed to address these key areas: (a) Clear communications; (b) teamwork among co-workers; (c) Benefits; (d) Salary; (e) Rewards; (f) Incentives; (g) Promotion opportunities; (h) Employee loyalty; (i) Training and development; and (j) Perceived organizational climate.

Questions were scaled from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Respondents were asked to circle one choice for each question. The surveys did not ask for the respondent's identity and were completely confidential. Of the 32 surveys distributed – 16 to HT and 16 to SIB – a total of 14 were completed and returned.

Based on the literature and professional experience, the author is aware that job satisfaction surveys have been administered in numerous studies to determine the key factors of employee satisfaction in the workplace. Researchers have gained insight into what helps to make and keep an employee satisfied with their work environment and organizational culture.

The author's survey was designed to examine if such insight was accurate for the selected participants. The survey also allowed the author to separate and group responses for analysis.

Respondents were asked to respond to, but not limited to, the following questions:

1. I know what is expected of me at work. Setting clear expectations should not be a new concept to managers. However, many managers will focus on describing the job step by step, rather than focusing on guiding different people with different styles toward productivity.

2. I have the right tools and material to properly do my work. Many organizations have stepped into the computer and new technology era at a rapid pace. Many of its employees have been placed in front of or given this new technology to use in customer service. Yet, these organizations have not properly trained its employees to use this new technology.

3. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person. Gallup research indicates that employees don't leave organizations they leave managers and supervisors (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p.1). Employees should feel as if their manager is concerned about them as a person and that they have a friend in their co-workers.

4. My co-workers are committed to doing quality work. Trusting that a co-worker shares a commitment to quality is the key to great team performance.

5. I have had the opportunity at work to learn and grow. Productivity in the workplace does not come from working harder, it comes from working smarter. Finding new and more efficient ways to do a job is one way to learn and grow at work.

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

"Survey research tries to collect information about what is on the respondents' minds. Responses collected through surveys are often classified according to categories imposed by the researcher, such as attitudes and organizational culture. Attitudes are the most common component of surveys; they include, but are not limited to, components of job satisfaction and perceived organizational culture" (Hofstede, 1998, p. 1).

Based on the literature as well as professional experience, the author had preconceived expectations as to what these data would reveal. Among these expectations was the assumption that the primary factors of job satisfaction are employee involvement and recognition. The author also assumed that employees in a supportive organizational climate would have a high level of job satisfaction, resulting in respondents that rated a low level of job satisfaction to report being a part of a non-supportive organizational climate where they are not involved or recognized. "Circumstances and/or management actions can affect the organizational culture without negatively or positively influencing employee attitudes. Circumstances and/or management actions can affect employee attitudes without changing organizational culture. It is only the area of communication and cooperation where management actions affecting the culture also affect employee attitudes negatively or positively" (Hofstede, 1998, p. 12). "Research has shown that customer contact employees treat customers the way they are treated by management" (Berkley & Gupta, 1995, p.17). Thus the author hypothesized that employees who believe their managers are supportive tend to be more committed to their organizations and have higher job satisfaction than those who do not perceive their managers to be supportive.

Second, since the literature reported that if employees are satisfied, customers are satisfied, the author assumed that the data would reveal a link between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. The ability of employees to adapt service delivery to meet or exceed the customer's need can have an influence on customer satisfaction. Previous research has demonstrated that for employees to provide high quality service in customer relationships, it is critical that they are well supported by management, colleagues and the use of new technology in their industry. According to Sergeant and Frenkel (2000), employee satisfaction is fostered by "effective support services and policies that assist employees in their dealings with customers" (p. 19). Hence, customer contact employees can better judge which services and policies, if implemented, will provide increased quality for them and the customer. This builds the pretense for the author's assumption that a satisfied employee will use available resources to satisfy the customer, linking employee satisfaction to customer satisfaction.

Finally, as the relationship between the employee and the customer builds, the customer receives an overall image of the company from the employee. From this, the author makes the assumption that an employee's perception of the organization will influence the customer's organizational perception. Previous research has indicated that quality service delivered by knowledgeable and customer oriented employees creates a loyalty among the organization's customers and boosts the organization's image. Linking the organization's values to sensitive and community causes will help build a reputation as a caring, concerned and community oriented organization. By using systematic tools and interactive approaches, not just "feel good" programs, to ensure that the perceptions of critical customers are impacted is something organizations must do. Consequently, the organization's values shape how the employees and customers view the organization's services. In addition, open and honest communication will

further enhance the organizational reputation. If the organization communicates and delivers on its promise to the customer and ensures that customer contact employees are aware of and able to act on those promises, the organization will shape a favorable reputation.

Through the analysis of the data, the author expected to find evidence that the negative or positive behaviors of the employees are a direct result of the organizational climate and will have an on impact the customer, customer satisfaction, and customer perception.

Data Review

As indicated in Tables 1 and 2, the author's assumption that employee involvement and recognition are two key factors in job satisfaction was shown to be accurate. Of the 26 respondents (14 toll collectors, 7 office personnel, and 5 customer service representatives) 80% agreed/strongly agreed that they like the duties that make up their jobs and 84% agreed/strongly agreed that there is a good fit between their job and their skills and abilities. When asked if managers (a) make clear what is expected of them at work and (b) if employees were encourage to find new ways to do their jobs, 70% indicated that management did make clear what is expected of them, however only 53% reported that employees were encouraged to find new ways of doing their jobs. The author was surprised to find that the highest rate of disagreement of the 53% was among office personnel where 60% of the respondents, overall, indicated they disagree that employees are encouraged to find new ways of doing their jobs.

Table 1

Overall, I really like the duties and activities that make up my job.

55 % Agree	50 % Agree	75 % Agree	80 % Agree
5 % Strongly Agree	25 % Strongly Agree	25 % No Opinion	10 % No Opinion
40 % No Opinion	25 % No Opinion		10 % Disagree

Table 2

There is a good fit between the job I do and my skills and abilities.

45 % Agree	80 % Agree	100 % Agree	70% Agree
55 % No Opinion	10 % No Opinion		10 % Strongly Agree
10 % Disagree	10 % Disagree		20 % Disagree

Before examining the survey results of recognition and reward, the author requested that each department and facility report its system of employee reward and recognition. The Aviation Department has a program called "Airport Ambassadors." An airport ambassador is an any airport employee who has completed the special ambassador customer service program entitled "How to put the customer's needs first." Each year, the Port Authority recognizes those ambassadors who exemplify exceptional acts of courtesy and helpfulness. The event, a semi-formal luncheon, usually takes place at an airport hotel or at the World Trade Center. At this luncheon these ambassadors will receive special recognition in the form of cash prizes, gift certificates, air travel accommodations, or cruises. Since it is mandatory of all CSRs to go through ambassador training and the motto of the program is "No Good Deed Goes Unrecognized," customer service representatives who were not formally recognized at the luncheon receive recognition from the company that employs them. Generally, that takes the form of bonuses and extra days off.

In comparison, the Tunnels Bridges and Terminals Department has its own recognition awards ceremony each year. Awards are given to individuals and teams for outstanding contributions throughout the year. This award reception encompasses all staff of the TB&T Department as a whole. Staff members are rewarded with such awards as the "Director's Award

of Excellence" and the "Team Spirit Award." In addition to the departmental awards, each facility can have its own separate recognition and reward program. The Holland Tunnel also has reward and recognition programs in place for its employees. First, there is the IOD (Injured On Duty) free award, in the form of a gift certificate or excused day off. Second, there is a performance incentive award based on mystery shoppers hired to use the toll lanes and report on the courtesy and customer service received from the toll collector, who is then eligible to receive a \$250.00 cash prize if they exemplify a courteous performance. Last, there is a monthly review of the toll collector's Transaction Review Report (TRR). From this report the Holland Tunnel will reward collectors with gold, silver or bronze club status. The employee receiving the best TRR will be selected as the employee of the month. However, in an effort to give all collectors a chance for employee of the month, if the same person gets the best TRR twice, it will go to the next best. They are also rewarded with a gift certificate to a major department store. The Staten Island Bridges is currently working to implement an employee recognition program of its own.

Given this information, as indicated in Table 3, the author was not amazed to find that the SIB toll collectors indicated that evaluations of their work performance have been done fairly at a lower rate than the HT toll collectors and airport CSRs. In contrast, the author was surprised to find that 60% of office personnel indicated that their evaluations were not done fairly. Office personnel also reported that they were not paid fairly (see Table 4) for the work they do, whereas toll collectors and CSRs felt they were paid fairly.

Table 3

Evaluations of my work performance have been done fairly.

			Office Personnel
85 % Agree	70 % Agree	80 % Agree	60% Disagree
5 % No Opinion	10 % No Opinion	10% No Opinion	20 % Agree
10 % Disagree	20 % Disagree, Strongly Disagree	10% Strongly Agree	20 % No Opinion, Strongly Disagree

Table 4

I feel I am paid fairly for the work I do.

			Office Personnel
90 % Agree	70 % Agree	90 % Agree	70% Strongly Disagree
5 % No Opinion	20 % Disagree	10 % No Opinion	20 % Disagree
5 % Strongly Disagree	10 % No Opinion, Strongly Disagree		10 % No Opinion

The author attributes such data findings to the demographics that make up the personnel in each job function. The airport customer service representatives the author interviewed were in age range of 18 – 21. This was either their first job out of high school or a part time job while attending college. Therefore, the CSRs were content with their salaries, evaluations, and the ability to do their job well. On the other hand, among the toll collectors completing the survey, 9 of the 14 were in the age range of 36 – 50, have been employed with the same company for over 10 years, in this one position for over 10 years, with either a high school diploma or some college, and all earning well over \$45, 000 per year. Office personnel, on the other hand, cannot boast of such a situation. Among the office respondents, only two have been with the same company for over 10 years and two have been in the same position for over 6 years. Five of the

seven respondents had either a college or post college degree and posted in the salary range of \$30,000 - \$45,000 per year. These data are indicative of the employment trends today. Finding employment with an earning potential of over \$45, 000 with a high school diploma was not unusual more than 10 years ago, however it has been for the past 6 to 7 years. As a result, many office personnel see the salaries of the toll collectors and feel they are not as valued in their jobs. Since most office personnel also believe the collecting tolls is an easy job that anyone can do, and do not see the everyday frustration that goes with the job, they become unsatisfied with their employment and start to seek something better. As indicated in Table 5, most toll collectors, in contrast to office personnel, do not intend to leave their jobs, even if offered a slightly higher salary as in Table 6. The author did not request a response to these questions from airport customer service representatives.

Table 5

I intend to stay with this company for, at least, the next two years.

95 % Strongly Agree	95 % Strongly Agree		40% Agree
5 % Agree	5 % Agree		30 % Disagree
			30 % No Opinion

Table 6

I would stay with my company even if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay.

90 % Agree	85 % Agree		80% Strongly Disagree
5 % No Opinion	10 % Strongly Agree		10 % Disagree
5% Strongly Disagree	5 % Strongly Disagree		10 % Agree, No Opinion

Next the author examined the trust and communication factors of job satisfaction.

The author's assumption that trust was a key factor in job satisfaction was found to be inaccurate on an organizational level, but accurate on an employee – manager relationship level. Although employees had an overall response of 30% in agreement when asked if the organization trusts its employees, 50% responded that they felt comfortable going to their supervisor or manager with confidential material. A 20% increase over organizational trust, though not absolutely great, does show that a bond of trust can form between the employee and the manager. This trust relationship, however, depends on open and honest communication between the employee and manager, as 77% agreed/strongly agreed that their superior is friendly. The feeling that the manager is a friend further reinforces the bond of trust among employees.

As indicated in Table 7, the respondents feel they are well informed as to what is expected of them in their job and, as indicated in Table 8, employees feel they are given the information they need to help them do their work well. Of all the respondents, 55% agreed/strongly agreed that information about the organization is communicated well to them.

Table 7

Management makes clear what they expect of me.

Strongly Agree		Disagree	
90 % Agree	55 % Strongly Agree	95 % Agree	55% Agree
10 % Strongly Agree	40 % Agree	5 % No Opinion	45 % Disagree
	5 % Disagree		

Table 8

Employees are given the information they need to help them do their work well.

80 % Agree	80 % Agree	100 % Agree	45% Agree
10 % Strongly Agree	10 % Strongly Agree		45 % No Opinion
10% Disagree	10 % No opinion, Disagree		10% Disagree

Another critical factor is the amount of support employees felt among each other and from the organization. When employees feel that the organization cares for them it increases their sense of value to the organization and improves job satisfaction. The author's assumption that a supportive and opportune climate within an organization was proven to be accurate. An overwhelming 95% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the organization provides enough training and development opportunities to help them do their work effectively. The same amount indicated that the organizational also is good about giving employees the right amount of equipment and supplies for their jobs. However, as indicated in Table 9, when asked if the organization understands the balance between work and family life the respondent's answers were inconclusive. A response to this question was not requested from customer service representatives.

Table 9

My employer understands the balance between my work and family life.

90 % No Opinion	40 % Disagree		30% Disagree
10 % Agree	20 % Strongly Disagree		40% No Opinion, Agree
	40% Agree, No Opinion		30%Strongly Disagree

It is also important for employees to trust that their co-worker shares the commitment to quality service and will help to enhance teamwork efforts. A critical element of the supportive climate is the teamwork efforts put forth by employees and their co-workers. Table 10 indicates that respondents were almost evenly split, 40 % agreed and 43% disagreed, when it came to agreement and disagreement when asked if co-workers made personal efforts to improve their skills to make a better contribution to their jobs. The same was true as 40% agreed and 33.3% disagreed when asked if the co-workers made personal sacrifices when required to help the work group succeed.

Table 10

The people I work with make personal efforts to improve their skills so that they can make a better contribution to their jobs.

Personnel			
35 % Agree	40 % Agree		45% Agree
35 % Disagree	50 % Disagree		45 % Disagree
30 % No Opinion	10 % No Opinion		10 % Strongly Disagree

Finally, the author examined the perception of the employees of the organization. With such a mix of opinion among the respondents the author assumed, inaccurately, that the perception would also be as mixed. To the contrary, 80% of the respondents recommended the organization as one of the best places to work in the community. Even more to the author's surprise was that 50% of toll collectors and 80% of airport customer service representatives agreed that the atmosphere of their job motivates them to come to work every day, however, 70% of office personnel disagreed with this statement. The author made the assumption that office personnel would have a higher rate of agreement with the statement that the atmosphere of

the job motivates them to come to work than toll collectors and CSRs. Still, from the high ratings among the toll collectors and CSRs, the author assumed, accurately, that the respondents were in overall agreement when asked if they were proud to work for the organization: 75% agreed and 25% had no opinion. As indicated in Table 11, when asked if the organization deserved their loyalty, the responses were similar to that of the feeling of motivation to come to work every day.

Table 11

I believe this organization deserves my loyalty.

90 % Agree	80 % Strongly Agree		50% Disagree
5 % Disagree	10 % Agree		25 % Agree
5 % No Opinion	10 % No Opinion		25 % No Opinion

Overall, the author sees that the job satisfaction was highest among airport customer service representatives and Holland Tunnel toll collectors. Although Staten Island Bridges toll collectors were not far below in job satisfaction ratings, there was still room for development in areas of employee involvement and communication. Yet, there is an overwhelming need for employee satisfaction development among office personnel. These findings support the author's primary assumption that the two key factors of job satisfaction are employee involvement and a supportive organizational climate. In the data, employee involvement and supportive climates received high ratings for those groups with higher job satisfaction.

Chapter V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the onset of her research, the author sought to learn the impact employee satisfaction and perception had on customer satisfaction and perception. Through a comprehensive review of the literature and implementation of a study of front line employees at the Holland Tunnel, Staten Island Bridges, and Newark International Airport, she found that there is a strong relationship between employee and customer satisfaction and employee and customer perception.

Both the literature and the data reveal that a supportive climate incorporating values such as harmony, openness, friendship, collaboration, encouragement, sociability, personal freedom and trust contributes strongly to employee satisfaction. Managers and senior staff aiming to increase employee involvement may be able to tap into the various facets of organizational climate and employee affective attitudes to assess the success of initiatives implemented by the organization. Specifically, the author also found that recognition and reward incentive programs had a positive impact on increasing employee satisfaction. From this, the author found that departments and/or facilities that had employee incentive programs in place had an overall higher rate of job satisfaction. Furthermore, as indicated in the survey material presented by J.D. Power and Associates in appendix B, the customers of Newark International Airport, when compared to JFK and LaGuardia airports, had an increased customer satisfaction rating and an improved perception of the organization.

Although the conclusions from the research data cannot be fully representative of the 1200 toll collectors employed by the Port Authority, the 200 customer service representatives employed at Newark International Airport, or the over 8,000 Port Authority office employees,

the author recommends research that will encompass the overall satisfaction and perception of toll collectors, CSRs, and office personnel. Most importantly, the author suggests that performance based incentive programs be assessed and transformed to meet the needs of each department and/or facility to increase employee satisfaction throughout the organization. In addition to providing insight to the employee's performance, the evaluation should also include relative feedback from the employee in the form of service recommendations, new ways to do their work and other valuable input. Such input should then be taken into consideration when implementing new initiatives and programs for employees, whether performance based or in the form of training and development.

Future Study

The data indicate that 95% of respondents feel that the company values and respects the customer more than its employees, which resulted in 75% admitting that this impacts the way they in turn treat the customers. The organization needs to find a balance between showing value and concern for the customer and value and concern for its employees.

A future study might include a closer look at a broader spectrum of transportation employees such as train engineers, conductors, bus drivers, highway toll collectors, and customer care call centers. Future studies could look at the level of job satisfaction of these employees, especially those dealing with the stresses of overcrowded train cars and buses during rush hours each day.

The author also suggests future studies to explore the perceptions, in depth, of transportation agencies among employees and customers. Do they care? Are they concerned? The answers to these question are found in the organization's actions, which are represented through its front line and customer contact employees.

Research is continuously done on sales and marketing frontline employees or customer call centers. These employees need to display an outstanding performance to maintain and create customer satisfaction and loyalty. Transportation agencies have only in the past 2 years begun to become more customer service oriented. The agencies still need to work on becoming employee service oriented. Although surveys find that customer satisfaction is on the rise at the tunnels, bridges, and airports, the rate of rising satisfaction scores are still low enough for major improvement to take place (see Appendix C). The author thus confirms that satisfied employees create satisfied customers and that transportation agencies need to start considering the employee first.

REFERENCES

Ammons, D., & Kohfeld, A. (1999). Quality system overhaul: Hydromat aims for true customer satisfaction. Quality, 38 (2), 50-55.

Adler, P.S., & Borys, B. (1996). Two types of bureaucracy: Enabling and coercive. Administrative Science Quarterly, 41, 61-89.

Anonymous (2000, October). How to be an effective manager. CMA Management, 74, (8), 14.

Asker, J. R. (1999). Why are passengers so angry at carriers? Aviation Week & Space Technology, 151 (17), 50-52.

Aviation Department (2000, January). Business Plan 2000-2004. New York: The Port Authority of NY & NJ.

Avoid negativity; Show loyalty to your agency (2000). Customers First for Government. New York: Dartnell Corporation.

Berkley, B., & Gupta, A. (1995) Identifying the information requirements to deliver quality service. International Journal of Service Industry Management, 6 (5), 16-35.

Bragg, T. (2000). How to reward and inspire your team. IIE Solutions, 32 (8), 38-40.

Brokaw, L., Murphy, A., Seglen, J. L. (1992). Inc., 14 (11), 105. [On-line].

Available: <http://proquest.umi.com>.

Buckingham, M., & Coffman, C. (1999, April 19). Gallup's discoveries about great managers and great workplaces. The Workplace Column. [On-line].

Available: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/managing/item5.asp>.

Burson-Marsteller with Wirthlin Worldwide (1998). Maximizing corporate reputation. [On-line]. Available: www.bm.com/files/insights/flash/mcr_index.html.

Fiorino, F., (1999, June 14). Passengers enraged, but does industry care? Aviation Week & Space Technology, 150 (24), 122.

Gallanis, P. J (2000, February). Consistent message applies to web too. Discount Stores News, 39 (3), 19.

Hofstede, G. (1998). Attitudes, values and organizations culture: Disentangling the concepts. Organization Studies, 19 (3), 477-492.

Hudson Institute (1997). Conference on workforce commitment. Transcript of Panel on Employee/Employer Loyalty. [On-line]. Available: <http://www.hudson.org>.

J.D. Power and Associates (2000). May 2000 Terminal by Terminal Satisfaction Survey for Newark International, John F. Kennedy International and LaGuardia airports.

Johnlke, M. C., & Duhan, D. F. (2000, November). Supervisor communication practices and service employee job outcomes. Journal of Service Research, 3 (2), 154-165.

Johnson, J. D. (1993). Organizational communication structure. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Kacmar, K. M., Bozeman, D. P., Carlson, D.S., Anthony, W. P. (1999, March). An examination of the perceptions of organizational politics model: Replication and extension. Human Relations, 52 (3), 383-416.

Larson, L. (1999, June). Above board: Focusing on quality through employee satisfaction. Trustee, 52 (6), 21-22.

Lawler, E. E. (1991). High involvement management. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lawler, E. E. (1996). From the ground up. San Francisco, CA: Jossey – Bass.

Leonard, B. (1998, February). Spin-off makes head turn. HR Magazine, 43 (2), 108-114.

Leonhardt, D. (2000, June 25). Promises in the sky. New York Times, Late edition (East Coast), 5.13.

Masterson, S. S. (1999). A 'trickle-down' model of organizational justice: Relating employee and customer perceptions of and reactions to organizational fairness (Doctoral dissertation University of Maryland College Park, 1999). Dissertation Abstracts International, 59 (10-A).

Morris, D. (1999, March/April). Less is more: The case against open communication. Journal of Employee Communication Management, 9-14.

Nelson, B. (1993). 1001 ways to reward employees. San Diego, CA: Workman Publishing Company, Inc.

Nemec, R. (1999). What's new? Everything. Communication World, 17 (7), 21-24.

Oakland, J. S., & Oakland, S. (1998, July). The links between people management, customer satisfaction and business results. Total Quality Management, 9 (4/5), S185-S190.

Papiernik, R. L. (2000, October). Don't forget personal contact with workers. Nation's Restaurant, 34 (42), 64-66.

Port Authority of NY & NJ (1999, February 9). Port Authority Honors Airport goodwill ambassadors – No good deed goes unrecognized at JFK, LaGuardia and Newark. (Available from Port Authority of NY & NJ, One World Trade Center, 73SE, New York, NY 10048).

PR News (August 16, 1999). Strong service builds corporate reputation customer by customer. [On-line]. Available: <http://www.proquest.umi.com>

Reese, S. (2000, May). Strength in service. Business and Health, 18 (5), 41-42.

Richardson, H. L. (2000, July). Keeping score. Transportation & Distribution, 41 (7), 63-69.

Seminario, M. (2000, October 9). Delayed Takeoffs: Airlines struggling to provide customer service online. e-Week. [On-line].

Available: www.zdnet.com/ew...ies/general/0,11011,2636267,00.html.

Sergeant, A., & Frenkel, S. (2000, August). When do customer contact employees satisfy customers? Journal of Service Research, 3 (1), 18-34.

Stum, D. L. (1998). Session 12: Panel on employee/employer loyalty. Paper presented at the Hudson Institute Conference on Employee/Employer Loyalty, Ann Harbor, MI.

Stupak, V. C., & Stupak, R. J. (1997). Perception management: An active strategy for marketing and selling. The Sales Trainer, 15 (3). [On-line].

Available: <http://www.bm.com/insights>.

Surline, T. (1999, January/February). Credit staff retention strategies. Union Executive Journal, 39 (1), 28-32.

Taylor, S. L., & Cosenza, R. M. (1997, October). 10 thoughts on employee retention. HR Focus, 74 (10), S14.

Tunnels Bridges and Terminals Department (2000, January). Business Plan 2000-2004. New York: The Port Authority of NY & NJ.

Verespej, M. A. (1998, February 16). Lessons from the best. Industry Week, 247 (4), 28-36.

Voros, S. (2000, January). 3D Management. Management Review, 89 (1), 45-47

Walker Information Group (1999). Corporate reputation report; Your reputation: asset or liability? [On-line]. Available: www.walkerinfo.com.

Walker Information Group (1999). Measurements Newsletters. (Vols. 2-5).

[On-line]. Available: www.walkernet.com.

Walker Information Group and the Hudson institute (2000). The 1999 U.S. national employee relationship benchmark report. [On-line]. Available: www.walkerinfo.com.

Witthaus, M. (1999). Performing tricks marketing week special report. Centaur Communications Ltd, 57. [Online].

Available: <http://lexis-nexis.shu.edu/universe...d5=752b14a804daf8e7c28d6c66ca67fbfa>.

Appendix A
A Brief Statement About the
Port Authority of NY & NJ

ABOUT THE PORT AUTHORITY NY & NJ

Background

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, is a body created on April 30, 1921 by compact between the States of New Jersey and New York with the consent of the Congress of the United States of America. The mission of the Port Authority is to serve the people of the New York-New Jersey region by developing, operating and maintaining transportation and trade facilities and systems to strengthen the region's economy.

The Port Authority is a financially self-supporting public agency. It receives no tax revenues from any state or local jurisdiction and has no power to tax. The Port Authority relies almost entirely on revenues generated from its facilities, including toll, fees, charges, rents and the sale of its bonds.

Business Areas

The Port Authority is a bi-state agency that operates more than 25 facilities located in New York and New Jersey. The facilities include: six interstate tunnels and bridges; a regional system of three airports, a general aviation airport and a heliport; the World Trade Center; six marine terminals; an interstate rail transit system; a bus terminal and bus station; a legal center; industrial parks; a resource recovery facility; ferry service and the teleport business and communications center.

Please visit the Web site at www.panynj.gov for more information about the Port Authority's business areas, facilities and programs.

Background – Aviation Department

The mission of the Aviation Department is to develop, provide, promote, operate, and maintain the New York/New Jersey region's public air transportation facilities (John F. Kennedy International, Newark International, LaGuardia, Teterboro, and the Manhattan-Downtown Heliport) in a single efficient and competitive system that strengthens the region's economy while meeting the high level of service demanded by the public.

The Aviation Department's goal is to provide the highest level service, which is critical to achieve world class airport status. It is important for the Bidder to understand that, among the three airports, there are 17 different terminals and 10 different terminal operators. There are two goals of these newsletters. The first goal is to provide awareness to all airport employees (whether they work directly for the Port Authority or not) of the Port Authority's standards of customer care: all airport operations function as a single integrated airport system, delivering the highest level of customer service possible. The second goal is to provide employee awareness of their respective airport's redevelopment and customer service efforts and the substantial benefits of these efforts to employees, customers and the region.

Please visit the airport Web sites, www.newarkairport.com, www.kennedy.com and www.laguardiaairport.com, for more information and updates on the airports.

Appendix B

Job Satisfaction Survey

NOTE: The results of this survey are kept strictly confidential.

Job Satisfaction Survey Questions

Participant must work at least 20 hours a week, be a frontline employee with constant customer contact, and be employed at either JFK, LGA, EWR airports, HT or SIB.

At which airport do you work? (please check all that apply)

- ☐ JFK ☐ EWR ☐ LGA ☐ HT ☐ SIB

How long have you worked for your current employer? (please check one)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 6 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 to 12 months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 3 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 6 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 to 10 years | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 10 years |

How long have you been in your current position?

_____ years and/or _____ months

What is your work status? (please check one)

- ☐ Full Time ☐ Part Time

Which category best describes your position? (please check one)

- ☐ Staff ☐ Manager ☐ Supervisor ☐ Associate

For the following questions, please circle the answer that best represents your feelings toward your job satisfaction.

The people I work with make personal efforts to improve their skills so that they can make a better contribution to their jobs.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

The people I work with make personal sacrifices when required to help our work group succeed.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I would recommend me company as one of the best places to work in my community.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I intend to stay with this company for, at least, the next two years.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

The work I do is interesting.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I have an opportunity to develop my abilities and talents.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am given a chance to do the things I do best.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I can see the results from my work.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am given fair appraisal and/or criticism.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am given the freedom to decide how to do my own work.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Employees are encouraged to try new ways of doing things at work.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

The problems I am expected to solve at work are too hard.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I would stay with my company even if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I feel I am paid fairly for the work I do.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I feel my job is secure.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am satisfied with the company's compensation and benefits program.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Evaluations of my work performance have been done fairly.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am not asked to do excessive amounts of work.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

The physical surroundings are pleasant.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

The atmosphere of my job motivates me to come to work every day?

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I do not have conflicting demands placed on me by different managers.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

The hours I work are good.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Opportunities for personal growth are provided by my company.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Promotions are handled fairly.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

My employer is concerned about giving everyone a chance to get ahead.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

The chances for promotion are good.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

My employer understands the balance between my work and family life.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I feel a strong personal attachment to this organization.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

At this organization, I feel highly motivated to do my work well.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I would find it difficult to leave this organization now, even if I wanted to.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am proud to work for this organization.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I believe this organization deserves my loyalty.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Org. and Work

Overall, I feel that this organization treats its employees fairly.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Employees are given the information they need to help them do their work well.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

My job responsibilities are clearly defined.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

This organization truly trusts its employees.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Information about the organization is communicated well to employees.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Overall, I really like the duties and activities that make up my job.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Work Factors

This organization provides enough training and development opportunities to help me do my work effectively.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

This organization is good about giving employees the right equipment and supplies for their jobs.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Management makes clear what they expect of me at work.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am challenged by the Managers and the people I work with.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

My superior is friendly.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am given the right amount of information about this organization.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Information is communicated in a timely way at this organization.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

There is a good fit between the job I do and my skills and abilities.

Strongly Agree Agree No Opinion Disagree Strongly Disagree

Other Questions

Please check one box for each answer.

I have a copy of my organization's mission statement.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I have been made aware of all employee benefits.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I feel comfortable going to my supervisor with confidential material?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you feel your employer treats its customers better than it treats its employees?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Does how the company treat you impact the way you provide customer service?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you ever felt that you provided customer service that was not helpful?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, briefly describe the situation and what caused you to provide such service.

Do you believe the company ultimately aims to satisfy its employees, customers, or both? Briefly explain the reason for your answer.

The following questions will be used for statistical purposes only.

What is your gender (please check one)?

☐ Female

☐ Male

What is your age range? (please check one)

☐ 18-23

☐ 24-29

☐ 30-35

☐ 36-42

☐ 43-50

☐ Over 50

What is the highest level of education completed by you?

☐ High School

☐ GED

☐ Trade School

☐ Some College

☐ College

☐ Post College

What is your annual household income?

☐ Under 15,000

☐ 15,000 – 30,000

☐ 30,000 – 45,000

☐ Over 45,000

Appendix C
J.D. Power and Associate
May 2000 Terminal by Terminal
Customer Satisfaction Survey Results
Newark International Airport

APOLLO
CLASS

2000

Term

for



Presentation of Results
EWR

August 1, 2000

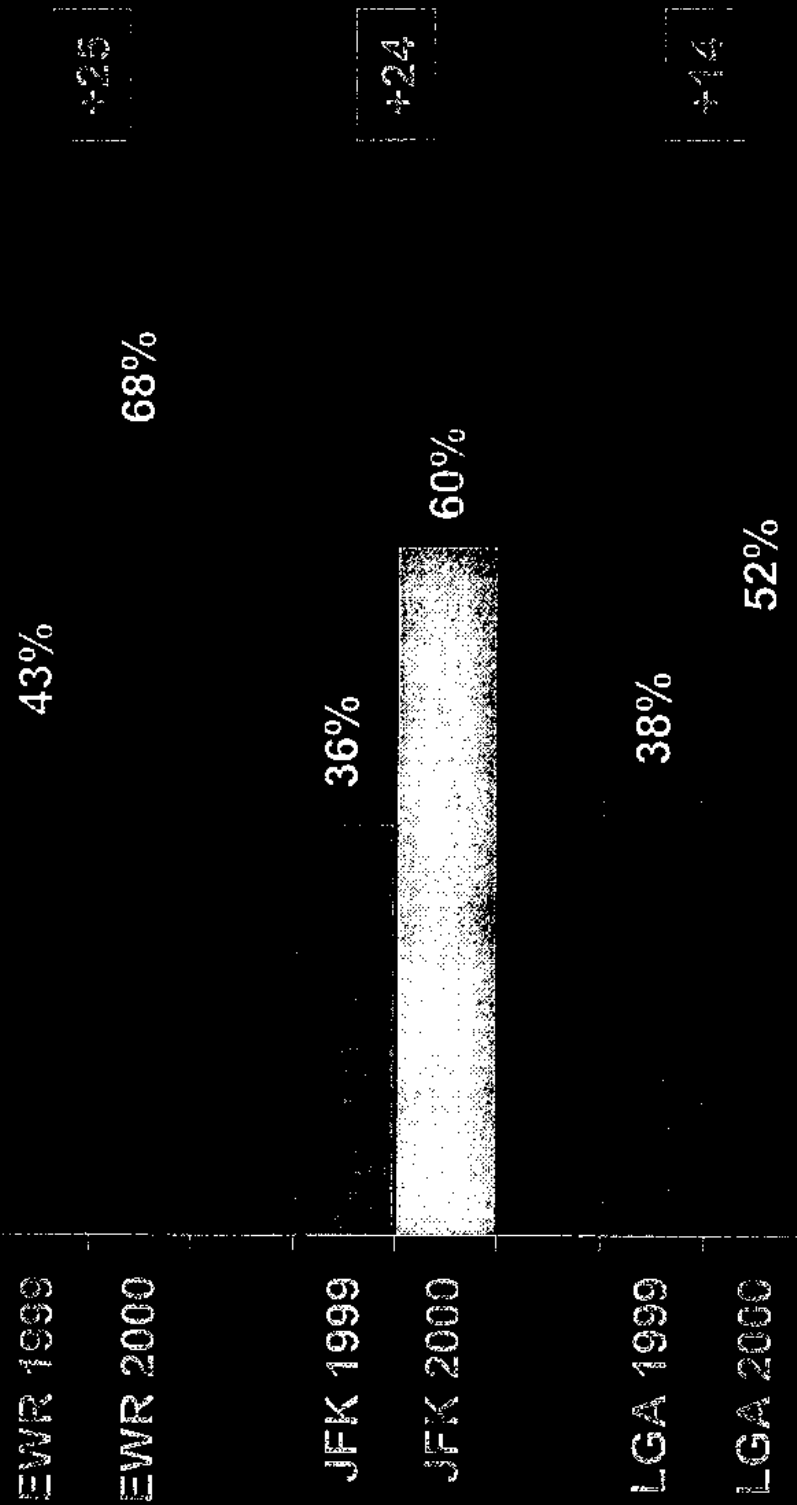
Overall Results

LEVERAGING

Arrival Satisfaction Has Improved At All Three Airports

Overall Arrival Satisfaction: % "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999



= Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score

= Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Source: 2000 PANYNJ Terminal By Terminal Survey

Terminal B Still Has The Highest Annual Satisfaction Score At EWR -- Terminal A Shows The Biggest Improvement

Arrival Satisfaction: % "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10) 2000 vs. 1999

EWR TOTAL	68%	+25
Terminal A	74%	+33
Terminal B	80%	+26
Terminal C	56%	+14

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Why Have Arrival Results Improved So Much?

The PANYNJ has worked on the key drivers for arrivals

Signs & Directions

Restroom Cleanliness & Condition

Immigration & Customs Clearance

Improvements in these areas have driven up arrival satisfaction

The magnitude of the improvement is a result of surpassing expectations

Respondents tend to “overreact” when they are pleasantly surprised

If status quo is maintained, these scores will decline somewhat

Arriving Passengers Are Very Pleased With The Improved Signage, Both On The Frontages...

Satisfaction With SIGNS/DIRECTIONS OUTSIDE THE TERMINAL:
% Of Arriving Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999

EWB TOTAL	64%	+27
Terminal A	72%	+37
Terminal B	78%	+37
Terminal C	52%	+15

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

...And Inside the Terminals

Satisfaction With SIGNS/DIRECTIONS INSIDE THE TERMINAL:
% Of Arriving Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999

EWR TOTAL	62%	+20
Terminal A	74%	+35
Terminal B	68%	+17
Terminal C	53%	+11

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Arriving Passengers Are Also Noticing The Improved Cleanliness/Condition Of The Restrooms

Satisfaction With RESTROOM CLEANLINESS/CONDITION:
% Of Arriving Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999

EWR TOTAL	67%	+29
Terminal A	74%	+42
Terminal B	70%	+22
Terminal C	62%	+22

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

International Arrivals Rate The Customs And Immigration Process Very Highly At Terminal B

% Of Arriving Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999

Customs
Clearance
Overall

86%

+21

Immigration/
Passport
Clearance
Overall

87%

+31

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Moving Forward in A Customer Satisfaction Improvement Program

Addressing passenger priorities is the fastest way to improve satisfaction

What drives satisfaction can change over time

Progress in one area can shift priorities to another area

Environmental changes can adversely affect performance in previous "non-problem" areas

One dramatic change:

Passenger traffic has grown dramatically this year, leading to crowded terminals and more frequent delays.



Arrival Satisfaction At EWR

"Looking Ahead"

Increased passenger traffic means more people passing throughout the terminals

The new Signs & Directions, most notably those on the frontages, alleviated many potential problems

Although the terminals were more crowded, people found it easier to get off the grounds anyway

Overall Results

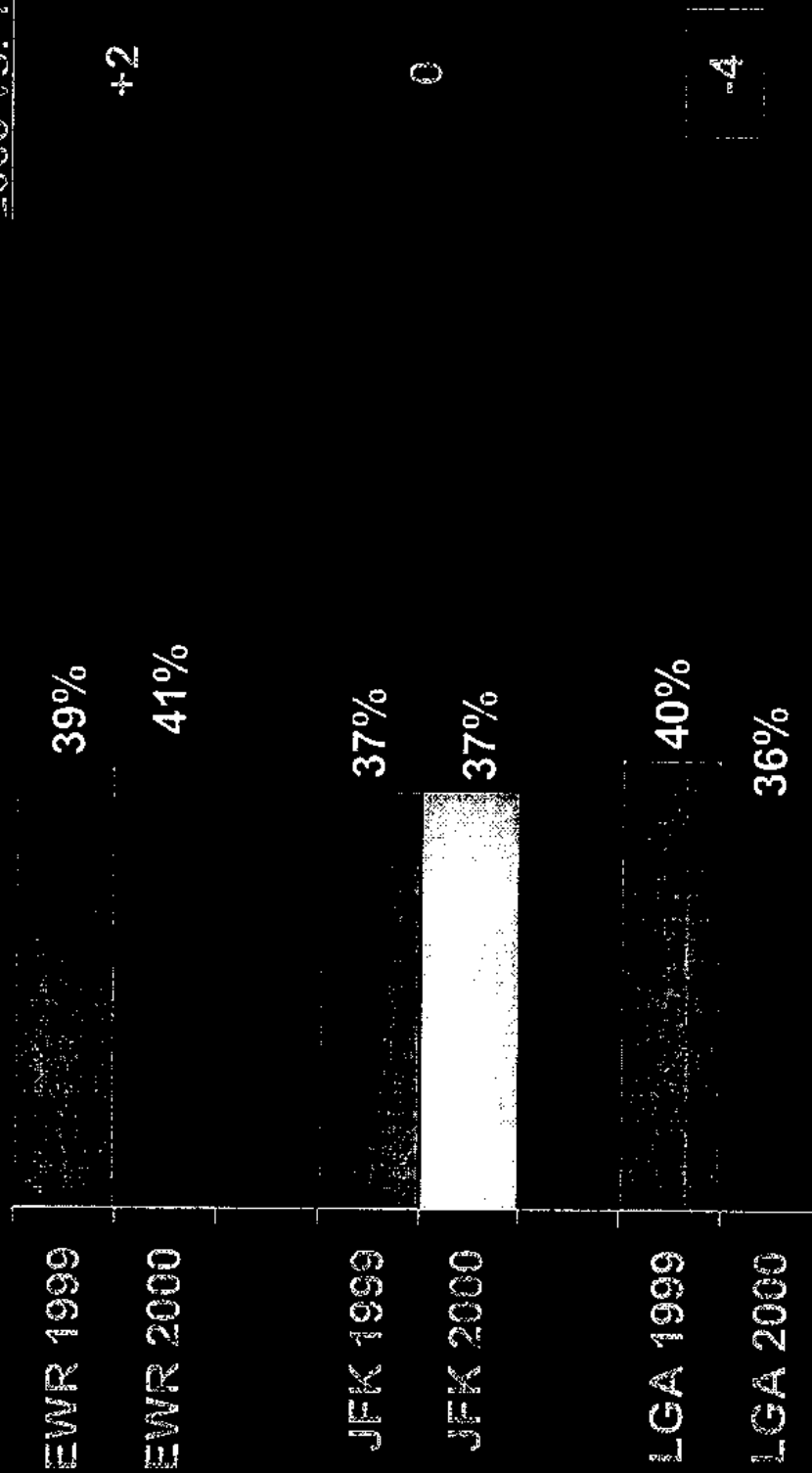
- EWR Departures -



Overall Departure Satisfaction Has Remained Relatively Unchanged

Overall Departure Satisfaction: % "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999



☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score

☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Source: 2000 PANYNJ Terminal By Terminal Survey

Terminal B Has The Highest Departure Satisfaction Score At EWR -- Both Terminal A And B Show Improvement

Departure Satisfaction: % "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10) 2000 vs. 1999

EWR TOTAL	41%	+2
Terminal A	43%	+5
Terminal B	47%	+5
Terminal C	38%	-1

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Why Haven't Departure Results Improved As Much As Arrivals?

**Items impacting departure satisfaction have a
longer timeframe**

Retail Variety & Quality

Food & Beverage Variety & Quality

Performance in these areas remain flat

**Increased traffic and delays impact departing
passengers more than arrivers**

Evaluating Food & Beverage/Retail At Airports

Passengers tend to be harsher in their Food & Beverage/Retail evaluations compared to other aspects of the airport experience

Even airports who are in the Top 10 of Retail/Food & Beverage have only 40% ~ 50% of their passengers
“Delighted/Pleased”

Retail Quality Evaluations Did Not Improve Overall, And Actually Declined At Terminal B

Satisfaction With RETAIL QUALITY:

% Of Departing Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999

EWR TOTAL

26%

-5

Terminal A

21%

-5

Terminal B

23%

-9

Terminal C

30%

-4

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score

☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Perceptions of Terminal B's Retail Variety Also Did Not Improve

Satisfaction With RETAIL VARIETY:
% Of Departing Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999

EWR TOTAL	24%	0
Terminal A	20%	0
Terminal B	17%	-5
Terminal C	28%	-2

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Terminal C's Food & Beverage Quality Receives A Lower Score This Year - The Other Terminals Did Not Improve

Satisfaction With FOOD & BEVERAGE QUALITY:
% Of Departing Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999

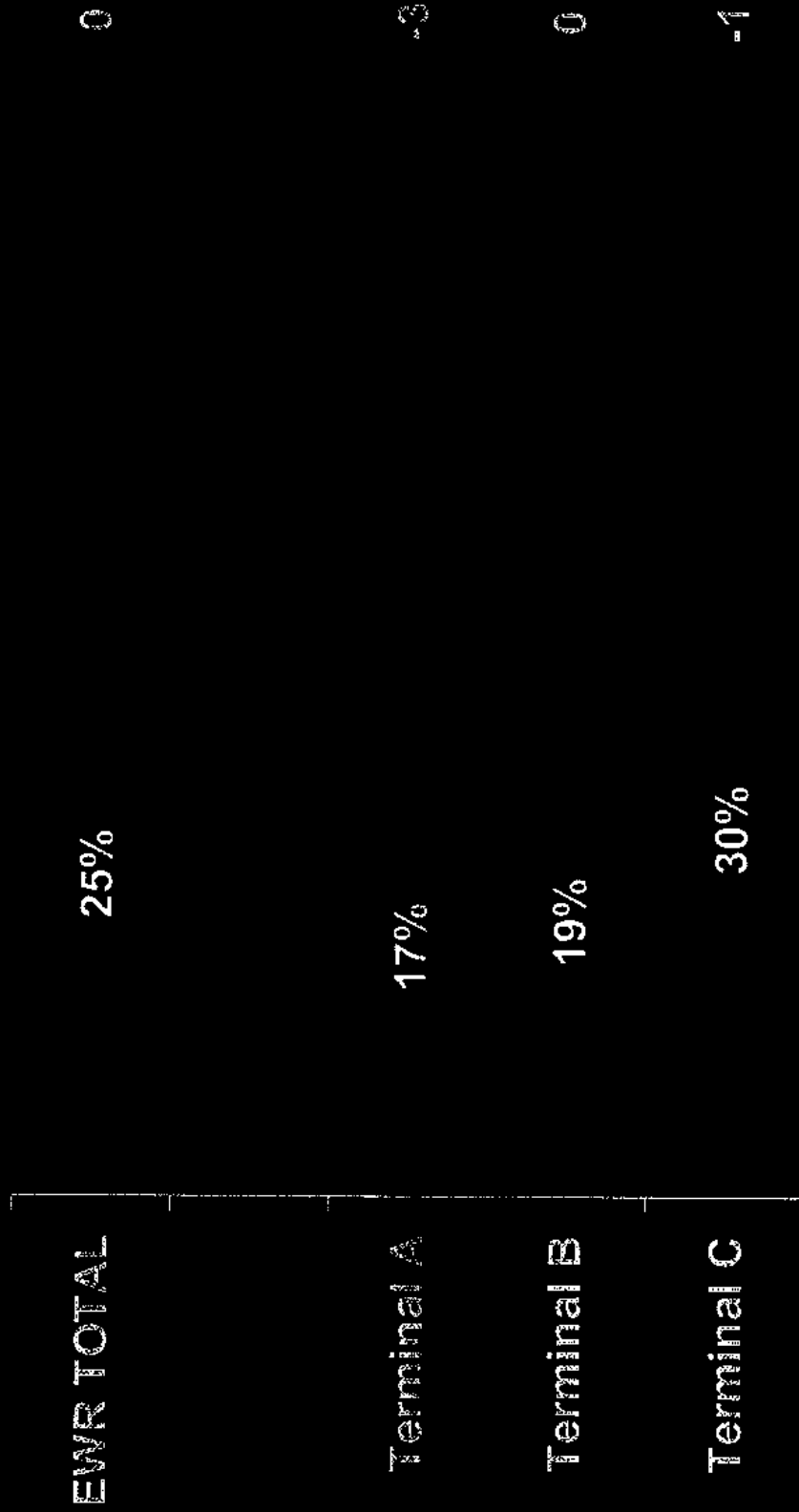
EWB TOTAL	23%	-5
Terminal A	20%	-4
Terminal B	20%	-2
Terminal C	25%	-9

☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Food & Beverage Variety Remained Constant

Satisfaction With FOOD & BEVERAGE VARIETY:
% Of Departing Passengers "Delighted/Pleased" (8-10)

2000 vs. 1999



☐ = Statistically HIGHER than 1999 score
☐ = Statistically LOWER than 1999 score

Departure Satisfaction At EWR

- Looking Ahead -

Increased passenger traffic has had an impact on departure satisfaction

When basic needs are not met, the priority of these items jumps right to the forefront

The experience in the Gate Area now has the most impact on departure satisfaction at EWR

Improving Departure Passenger Satisfaction At EWR

Continue efforts to improve Retail/Food & Beverage Variety/Quality

**Provides activity options that will help those stuck on-
airport**

**Will grow in importance again as passenger traffic issues
are solved**

Address issues at the Gate Area

Courtesy/helpfulness of airline staff

Cleanliness/condition of the gate areas

Summary

The PANYNJ's satisfaction improvement efforts are yielding results

Departure satisfaction has not improved at the rate arrival satisfaction has because...

the improvements in Retail/Food & Beverage Quality/Variety are not enough as of yet current air traffic conditions are affecting passenger satisfaction

Stay focused on what is important to arriving passengers

Sign & Directions, Restrooms

Terminal C should add Baggage Claim to this list